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## FOREWORD

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In December, 1914, a meeting of business men was called by Mayor Blankenburg with a view to seeing what steps the Philadelphia community should take with regard to its unemployment problem. This meeting was attended by Samuel Rea, President of the Pennsylvania Railroad; J. Howell Cummings, President of The John B. Stetson Company; J. W. Van Dyke, President of the Atlantic Refining Company; Franklin Brewer, General Manager of Wanamaker's; Louis J. Kolb, of the Kolb Bakery Company; Joseph Steele, of Wm. Steele & Sons Co., builders; Louis Bloc, of the Ford Motor Company, and several members of the Mayor's cabinet.

The number of men and women out of employment had at that date not reached so high a total as was experienced during the following January and February. The meeting was called together with the thought of taking all possible steps which might act to minimize the ultimate amount of unemployment. A number of suggestions as to possible lines of action were made. It was the consensus of opinion that the agencies then at work would give the maximum of relief to the immediate situation. The conference felt that the municipality should rather acquaint itself with the problem in its broader aspects, to find out what other municipalities were doing in this matter, and to make a general study of the problem of unemployment such as would suggest what steps might be taken to minimize it in the future in Philadelphia. As there was a vacancy then existing in the position of General Inspector, Office of the Director, Department of Public Works, and as this position was exempt under civil service rules, it was suggested that this vacancy be filled by the appointment of a student of economics qualified to carry on an inquiry into each of the phases of the general unemployment problem.

This suggestion having received the unanimous approval of the conference, and after several weeks of search for the right man, announcement was made of the appointment of Joseph H. Willits, 4519 Sansom Street, Instructor in Industry in the Wharton School

of Finance and Commerce of the University of Pennsylvania. The selection of Mr. Willits was approved by his associates in the faculty of the Wharton School and he was given an eight months' leave of absence in order to give his undivided attention to the work.

In this report it will be noted that an effort has been made to get down to the basic causes of unemployment and to describe a standard, which it is believed will, during the next generation, be forced upon any industrial community which is to compete in any large and successful way with sister communities at home and abroad.

Grateful acknowledgment is hereby made to those employers and employes (as well as others) whose courtesy and coöperation made possible the gathering together of the information which makes up this report. The almost unanimous desire of employers not to have their names mentioned in connection with information furnished makes it unfortunately necessary that cases shall be referred to anonymously.

Signed,

MORRIS L. COOKE,  
*Director.*